Interim order on life saving medicines

*600. DR. A. R. KIDWAI :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Supreme Court has issued interim order asking the government to lay down the criteria to bring essential and life saving medicines under price control by 2nd May, 2003;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the interim order of the Supreme Court;

(c) whether Government are set to explore all options to push through the policy of progressive decontrol ;

(d) if so, whether the Health Ministry and Law Ministry have been consulted on this issue; and

(e) if so, by what time the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken ?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SUKH DEV SINGH DHINDSA) : (a) to (e) The Supreme Court *vide* its order dated 10-3-2003 in Special Leave to Appeal (Civil) 3668/2003 has directed *inter alia*, to formulate appropriate criteria for ensuring essential and life saving drugs not to fall out of price control and further directed to review drugs which are essential and life saving in nature till 2nd May, 2003. The order of the Supreme Court and the relevant issues have been referred to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Department of Legal Affairs.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Fall in rice production in comparison to wheat

4332. SHRI R. KAMARAJ : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1732 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th March, 2003 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the fall in production in the financial year 2002-2003 was expected to be sharp in the case of rice than wheat; and